



Joseph M. DeRosa stood by a railing in the old Wauwatosa State Bank, which he is transforming into the Chancery

Pub and Restaurant, 7615 W. State St. The carved railing was made from the dome of a Lake Geneva mansion.

—Sentinel Photo by Richard Brodzeller

Vaulting Into a Meal

By DONNA ROUNER

Dollars to dumplings; pennies to pub burgers.

Food, as well as dollars, will change hands when patrons dine in the vault of the old Wauwatosa State Bank, a building soon to be the Chancery Pub and Restaurant, 7615 W. State St., in the Village area.

Joseph M. DeRosa, Chancery restaurant owner, is transforming the bank's design from a 1950s motif to an old time appearance.

The vault to be used as a dining room is the only part of the bank being salvaged.

Another dining area creates the atmosphere of a chapel, with a stained glass theme, carved wooden decorations and brass lighting fixtures.

One can fantasize a picnic, sitting in the restaurant's oak booths made of curved, slatted seats and divided by glass partitions. The booths were designed by DeRosa's architect.

A refreshing brunch could be enjoyed outside on the patio, overlooking the Menomonee River.

"I'm taking a little of the old and some new modern lines," DeRosa said.

DeRosa is not concerned whether his patrons appreciate the sources of his ornamentation.

"People are going to be able to feel where things came from," he said. "They'll see these old gaslights, which had to be converted, and they'll realize they haven't seen them around for a while. They'll know they're not production line items."

Some of the stained glass he is using,

like the 5 foot 10 inch windows on the building's front, is modern and hand-made, instead of refurbished relics.

DeRosa collects antiques and mixes his hobby with work by incorporating many of his "finds" into his businesses. He

Wauwatosa

owns two other restaurants, one in Racine built in an old farmhouse, and another recently built in Waukesha. He estimated that about four weeks of searching and negotiating were invested in this restaurant.

Entering the establishment through its two oak doors obtained from a church in Illinois, customers will be confronted by a hodgepodge of collectibles.

A hostess will use a refurbished dough table, obtained from a bakery in New Berlin. DeRosa describes it as "a casket on wheels." A carved wooden railing, made from the dome of a mansion in Lake Geneva, will contrast with a new oak floor and cedar walls.

"The reason I went to the refurbishing is you lose some of the character with a new structure," DeRosa said. "There's something in an old building that you can't build. We're going to try to complement the Village area."

The Village is the original downtown section of Wauwatosa, and the area has undergone redevelopment over the last few years. Federal funds have been used to improve the traffic flow and beautify the area, but businesses have been slow to participate in renovation.

DeRosa hopes refurbishing will be completed by April.